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1973/02/17

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By JWF Date 9/25/97

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Chou En-lai, Premier, State Council
Chi P'eng-fei, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Vice Minister of Foreign
Affairs

T'ang Wen-sheng, Interpreter
Shen Jo-yun, Interpreter

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs

John H. Holdridge, NSC Senior Staff
Winston Lord, NSC Staff

Cdr. Jonathan T. Howe, NSC Staff
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff
Mary Stifflemire, Notetaker

PLACE:

Great Hall of the People, Peking

DATE & TIME:

Saturday, February 17, 1973
2:20 - 6:25 p.m.

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Dr. Kissinger: First, about Cambodia. I cannot add much to what I said yesterday. But we would be in principle prepared -- after you have had an opportunity to consult with Sihanouk -- to discuss with you who might be acceptable negotiators on both sides and acceptable principals in an interim government. And I repeat, we would make an effort to find a solution which is consistent with the dignity of all sides. We also believe that an interruption in military activities after the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces...

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Chou En-lai: As for this question, as I said yesterday it is still under consideration, so I wouldn't reply today. Perhaps tomorrow I will be able to do so.

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Chou En-lai: The last time you said it would be desirable for Mr. Mansfield to come alone.

Dr. Kissinger: You are quite right. He is very insistent on coming, and we thought we could get around the problem by sending him on some governmental mission; so it is not your invitation but our proposal -- our sending him. But we don't insist on that. We are prepared to tell him that he must find a companion from the other Party. That may be the easiest.

Chou En-lai: But he is quite good at keeping faith, that is he will say what he should say and not say what he should not say.

Dr. Kissinger: That is true. Except where Sihanouk is concerned. He is a little bit emotional on that subject.

Chou En-lai: And he talks a little bit excessively so that is why Sihanouk is already not too happy about it. He said Samdech Norodom Sihanouk should act as provisional head of state. But Sihanouk says he is already head of State. He did it out of good intentions but on the contrary it has led to the unhappiness on the part of Sihanouk. Senator Mansfield looks very earnest but perhaps he is not very mature politically.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, I agree, and we don't want him involved in political negotiations. He can study humanitarian problems and exchanges and contacts. But he has no standing with us on political problems.

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